CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method for remotely monitoring and/or controlling a home device performed on a web-based host, the method comprising:

        establishing a connection with a remote device;

        receiving monitoring and/or control information from the remote device;

        establishing a connection with a home; and

        communicating the monitoring and/or control information to the home, wherein the monitoring and/or control information causes monitoring information to be obtained from a home device in the home and/or causes the a home device in the home to be controlled.

2. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

        receiving authentication information from the remote device; and

        determining at the web-based host whether a user of the remote device has permission to access the home.

3. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

        communicating graphical interface files to the remote device, the graphical interface files for allowing a user of the remote device to select a home device to monitor and/or control and for allowing the user of the remote device to specify how to monitor and/or control the home device.

4. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

encrypting the monitoring and/or control information before the monitoring and/or control information is communicated to the home.

5. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

receiving home device status information in response to the step of communicating the monitoring and/or control information from the web-based host to the home; and

communicating the home device status information to the remote device.

6. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

establishing a connection with the home if a home device in the home has detected an event;

receiving information which describes the event; and

communicating the information which describes the event to a user.

7. The method of Claim 1 wherein the remote device is a wireless telephone, a wireless personal digital assistant, or a wireless computer.

8. The method of Claim 1 wherein the remote device is a wired telephone, a wired personal digital assistant, or a wired computer.

9. A computer system for remotely monitoring and/or controlling a home device, the computer system comprising:

one or more computers connected to one or more remote devices via a network;

one or more computer programs executable by the computers, wherein the computer programs comprise computer instructions for:

establishing a connection with a remote device;

receiving monitoring and/or control information from the remote device;

establishing a connection with a home; and

communicating the monitoring and/or control information to the home, wherein the monitoring and/or control information causes monitoring information to be obtained from a home device in the home and/or causes the a home device in the home to be controlled.

10.   The computer system of Claim 9 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

receiving authentication information from the remote device; and

determining at the web-based host whether a user of the remote device has permission to access the home.

11.   The computer system of Claim 9 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

communicating graphical interface files to the remote device, the graphical interface files for allowing a user of the remote device to select a home device to monitor and/or control and for allowing the user of the remote device to specify how to monitor and/or control the home device.

12.   The computer system of Claim 9 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

encrypting the monitoring and/or control information before the

monitoring and/or control information is communicated to the home.

13. The computer system of Claim 9 wherein the computer programs further

comprise computer instructions for:

receiving home device status information in response to the step of

communicating the monitoring and/or control information from the web-based

host to the home; and

communicating the home device status information to the remote device.

14. The computer system of Claim 9 wherein the computer programs further

comprise computer instructions for:

establishing a connection with the home if a home device in the home

has detected an event;

receiving information which describes the event; and

communicating the information which describes the event to a user.

15. The computer system of Claim 9 wherein the remote device is a wireless

telephone, a wireless personal digital assistant, or a wireless computer.

16. The computer system of Claim 9 wherein the remote device is a wired

telephone, a wired personal digital assistant, or a wired computer.

17.   A computer readable storage medium storing one or more computer programs executable by one or more computers, one or more of the computer programs comprising computer instructions for:

establishing a connection with a remote device;

receiving monitoring and/or control information from the remote device;

establishing a connection with a home; and

communicating the monitoring and/or control information to the home, wherein the monitoring and/or control information causes monitoring information to be obtained from a home device in the home and/or causes the a home device in the home to be controlled.

18.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 17 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

receiving authentication information from the remote device; and

determining at the web-based host whether a user of the remote device has permission to access the home.

19.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 17 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

communicating graphical interface files to the remote device, the graphical interface files for allowing a user of the remote device to select a home device to monitor and/or control and for allowing the user of the remote device to specify how to monitor and/or control the home device.

20. The computer readable storage medium of Claim 17 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

encrypting the monitoring and/or control information before the monitoring and/or control information is communicated to the home.

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21. The computer readable storage medium of Claim 17 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

receiving home device status information in response to the step of communicating the monitoring and/or control information from the web-based host to the home; and

communicating the home device status information to the remote device.

22. The computer readable storage medium of Claim 17 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

establishing a connection with the home if a home device in the home has detected an event;

receiving information which describes the event; and

communicating the information which describes the event to a user.

20 23. The computer readable storage medium of Claim 17 wherein the remote device is a wireless telephone, a wireless personal digital assistant, or a wireless computer.

24. The computer readable storage medium of Claim 17 wherein the remote device is a wired telephone, a wired personal digital assistant, or a wired computer.

25.   A method for monitoring and/or controlling a home device performed on a home attendant, the method comprising:

establishing a connection with a web-based host; and

receiving monitoring and/or control information from the web-based

5   host.

26.   The method of Claim 25 further comprising:

communicating the monitoring and/or control information to a home device thereby causing monitoring information to be obtained from the home

10   device and/or causing the home device to be controlled.

27.   The method of Claim 25 further comprising:

communicating with a home device to determine whether the home

15   device has detected an event; and

if an event has been detected by the home device, establishing a secure connection with the web-based host and communicating the event to the web-based host.

20   28.   The method of Claim 25 further comprising:

communicating with a home device via a radio frequency connection.

29.   The method of Claim 25 further comprising:

communicating with a home device via a powerline connection.

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30.   The method of Claim 25 wherein the home device is a stand-alone device, a peripheral device, a personal computer, or a television set-top box.

31.   An apparatus for monitoring and/or controlling a home device, the apparatus comprising:

a microprocessor;

a memory connected to the microprocessor; and

one or more computer programs executable by the microprocessor, wherein the computer programs comprise computer instructions for:

establishing a connection with a web-based host; and

receiving monitoring and/or control information from the web-based host.

32.   The apparatus of Claim 31 further comprising:

communicating the monitoring and/or control information to a home device thereby causing monitoring information to be obtained from the home device and/or causing the home device to be controlled.

33.   The apparatus of Claim 31 further comprising:

communicating with a home device to determine whether the home device has detected an event; and

if an event has been detected by the home device, establishing a secure connection with the web-based host and communicating the event to the web-based host.

34. The apparatus of Claim 31 further comprising:

communicating with a home device via a radio frequency connection.

5 35. The apparatus of Claim 31 further comprising:

communicating with a home device via a powerline connection.

36. The apparatus of Claim 31 wherein the home device is a stand-alone

device, a peripheral device, a personal computer, or a television set-top box.

10 37. A computer readable storage medium storing one or more computer

programs executable by one or more computers, one or more of the computer programs

comprising computer instructions for:

establishing a connection with a web-based host; and

15 receiving monitoring and/or control information from the web-based

host.

38. The computer readable storage medium of Claim 37 wherein the

computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

20 communicating the monitoring and/or control information to a home

device thereby causing monitoring information to be obtained from the home

device and/or causing the home device to be controlled.

39.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 37 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

communicating with a home device to determine whether the home device has detected an event; and

5   if an event has been detected by the home device, establishing a secure connection with the web-based host and communicating the event to the web-based host.

40.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 37 wherein the

10   computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

communicating with a home device via a radio frequency connection.

41.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 37 wherein the computer programs further comprise computer instructions for:

15   communicating with a home device via a powerline connection.

42.   The computer readable storage medium of Claim 37 wherein the home device is a stand-alone device, a peripheral device, a personal computer, or a television set-top box.

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